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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF :
NOBUAKI MATSUOKA, ET AL. : EXAMINER: TADESSE, Y.
SERIAL NO: 10/585,975 :
FILED: JULY 13, 2006 : GROUP ART UNIT: 1792
FOR: SUBSTRATE PROCESSING :
APPARATUS AND SUBSTRATE
PROCESSING METHOD

STATEMENT OF SUBSTANCE OF INTERVIEW


COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313

SIR:

Applicant's representative was contacted on June 24, 2010, by Examiner Tadesse for authorization to enter an Examiner's Amendment, canceling the withdrawn claims, and amending claim 18 as shown on the attached partial claim listing. Applicant's representative provided authorization for this Examiner's Amendment on June 28, 2010. Applicants respectfully submit that the statement above and the attached claim sheet substantially summarize the substance of the interview with Examiner Tadesse in accordance with MPEP § 713.04.

Respectfully submitted,

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EXAMINER'S PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A substrate processing apparatus, comprising:

a carrier block including a carrier placement portion to/from which a substrate carrier storing a plurality of substrates is loaded/unloaded, and first transfer means for performing delivery of the substrate with respect to the substrate carrier placed on the carrier placement portion;

second transfer means provided adjacent to the carrier block and for transferring the substrate along a linear transfer path extending in a lateral direction;

a first delivery stage for performing delivery of the substrate between said first transfer means and said second transfer means;

a plurality of process blocks each including a plurality of process units for performing predetermined processing on the substrate, third transfer means for transferring the substrate between the plurality of process units in each of the process blocks of the plurality of process blocks, and a second delivery stage for performing delivery of the substrate between said second transfer means and said third transfer means, said plurality of process blocks being provided with respect to a main body of the apparatus to be arranged along said transfer path, and performing a series of substrate processing on the substrates in units of the plurality of process blocks;

a process block control portion controlling operations of said third transfer means and the respective process units and outputting processing information of the substrates within the corresponding process block such that predetermined processing is performed on the substrates in each of the process blocks based on a predetermined recipe; and

a controller programmed to determine a process block where there is no substrate or where a final step for the last substrate within the relevant process block will be finished

earliest based on the processing information of the substrates from the process block control portions before the substrate is delivered from the first delivery stage to the second transfer means, and for controlling the second transfer means to transfer the substrate on said first delivery stage to the relevant process block;

each of said process ~~block~~ blocks including a coating unit for applying a resist solution to the substrate, a developing unit for performing developing processing on the substrate after exposure to light, a heating unit for heating the substrate, the third transfer means for transferring the substrate between the coating, developing, and heating ~~the~~ units, and the second delivery stage for performing delivery of the substrate between said second transfer means and said third transfer means, and such application of the resist solution and/or the developing processing after exposure to light being performed on the substrate in units of each process block.